

Lessons From Prison Pt. 6

September 6, 2020

Our Motivation Cannot Be Self-Preservation, But Abandonment To God's Will

Philippians 1:20-26 ESV

20 as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always **CHRIST WILL BE HONORED IN MY BODY**, whether by life or by death.

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell.

23 I am **HARD PRESSED BETWEEN THE TWO**. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.

24 But **TO REMAIN IN THE FLESH IS MORE NECESSARY ON YOUR ACCOUNT**.

25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith,

26 so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

- *Adversity immediately sends the human nature into self-preservation mode e.g. "fight or flight."*

Job 13:2-3 ESV

2 What you know, I also know; I am not inferior to you.

3 But I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to argue my case with God.

2 Corinthians 12:8 ESV

8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me.

Matthew 26:44 ESV

44 So, leaving them again, he [Jesus] went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again.

Hebrews 2:18 ESV

18 For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

- *In Paul's musings in these verses, we never see self-preservation, self-promotion or self-gratification.*
- *In Paul's adversity of imprisonment, he asks three questions:*
 - *How will God be glorified? ("...Christ will be honored in my body...")*
 - *What is God's will? ("...I am hard pressed between the two...")*
 - *What is best for others? ("...to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account...")*

Romans 12:1-2 ESV

1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- *Being conformed to this world would be the worship of, and fight for, the idol of self: self-preservation, self-promotion, self-gratification.*
- *Being conformed to this world is the antithesis of being a living sacrifice, utterly and absolutely abandoned to the sovereign purposes and plan of God for your life.*

“My Way” by Frank Sinatra

<p><i>"And now the end is near, And so I face the final curtain, My friend, I'll say it clear, I'll state my case of which I'm certain, I've lived a life that's full, I've travelled each and every highway, And more, much more than this I did it my way."</i></p>	<p><i>"I did what I had to do, And saw it through without exemption, I planned each chartered course, Each careful step along the by-way, And more, much more than this I did it my way."</i></p>	<p><i>"For what is a man, what has he got? If not himself then he has naught, To say the things he truly feels, And not the words of one who kneels, The record shows I took the blows, And did it my way, Yes, it was my way."</i></p>
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Job 1:13-21 ESV

13 Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house,

14 and there came a messenger to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them,

15 and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

16 While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

17 While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "The Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

18 While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house,

19 and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

20 Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped.

21 And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

- *Job's worship, in the midst of such sorrow, pain and loss, was the surrender and abandoning of himself to God's will and purposes.*
- *What adversity are you facing that is creating stress, fear, oppression, depression, fatigue, despair? Surrender to God's will by worshipping Him in the midst of the trial.*

- *In surrender and worship you will find the courage, the peace, the joy and the victory to face whatever you have to face.*
- *Anger, hatred, revenge, bitterness, unforgiveness, cursing — would all be fighting for and the worship of the idol of self.*

Matthew 11:28-30 ESV

28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

- *Only by surrender to the yoke of Jesus do we find our burden light and rest for our souls.*
- *It's when we question, resist and struggle against the yoke, that we become fearful, discouraged and fatigued.*

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 ESV

7 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited.

8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me.

9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

- *When Paul stopped pleading, struggling, resisting and surrendered in boasting and praising God for the work being done through the trial, that is when Paul experienced the grace and the power of God.*

Job 2:7-10 ESV

7 So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

8 And he took a piece of broken pottery with which to scrape himself while he sat in the ashes.

9 Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die."

10 But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

- *Only by surrendering to the will of the Lord in worship (Job 1:20) did Job have the power and strength to face the escalation of the trial.*
- ***Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?"*** Job was absolutely and unconditionally surrendered to God's plan for his life, no matter what that included.
- *Cursing God, from a heart of anger, rebellion, hatred and bitterness, would have been the final gasp of the self-life: self-preservation, self-promotion, self-gratification.*

Job 13:13-15 ESV

13 *Let me have silence, and I will speak, and let come on me what may.*

14 *Why should I take my flesh in my teeth and put my life in my hand?*

15 *Though he slay me, I will hope in him; yet I will argue my ways to his face.*

- **ESV** "Though He slay me, I will hope in Him."
- **CSB** "Even if He kills me, I will hope in Him."
- **NASB** "Though He slay me, I will hope in Him."
- **KJV** "Though He slay me, I will hope in Him."
- **NLT** "God might kill me, but I have no other hope."

Mark 8:34-37 ESV

34 *And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*

35 *For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.*

36 *For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?*

37 *For what can a man give in return for his soul?*

Philippians 2:3-9 ESV

3 *Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.*

4 *Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

5 *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,*

6 *who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,*

7 *but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.*

8 *And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

9 *Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name.*